ANNOYATOR

asifa east
The International Animated Film Society

CHAPTER

June 1997

Bring your 16mm films, VHS and 3/4" videos to our annual

Open Screening

Sign up by 6pm to show your film

Fri., June 13, 1997. Tisch School of the Arts, NYU. 721 B'way (cnr. B'way & Waverly) Rm 108 **6:30pm**

Last year's screening included student films, commercial reels, finished films and works-in-progress like Veronica Balint's **Last Hand**, (above) in which a poker player faces Death.

Letter from the President

Linda Simensky

Greetings from the South. Hard to believe but it's the end of another ASIFA season. We happily subscribe to the school calendar theory, and take off for the summer, so you won't hear from us again until after Labor Day.

I'm not sure what I'll be doing this summer, but I can assure you, I won't be reading the book *Serious Business* by Stefan Kanfer. I purchased this book recently, thinking, "oh boy, another book about animation." When I got it home and glanced through it, I realized that I had just wasted almost 30 dollars on yet another book designed to take advantage of animation's current popularity. At first, I thought a book that promised a look at "the art and commerce of animation in America from Betty Boop to Toy Story" would be a hard-hitting analysis of the business decisions in animation, and how they impacted the art. No, wait, that was my class at SVA. This book is merely a basic history of animation, or perhaps it's a book report written by a guy who has read a lot of Canemaker and Maltin. I looked to see if there was any mention of the Cartoon Network, where I work. Kanfer, a reporter for Time Magazine, referred on the second to last page of the book to "Ted Turner's Cartoon Channel." This from a reporter? He refers to John Kricfalusi as "quitting" *Ren & Stimpy*. Even John would say that's incorrect.

> "Every time I look at Kanfer's history of animation (**Serious Business**), I find him making some assertion that is inaccurate or just plain annoying."

Kanfer sums up the history of animation since the 80s in one 23-page chapter. Every time I look at this book, I find some assertion that is inaccurate or just plain annoying. Note to self and all others in the industry: write memoirs and books about animation to offset junk like this. (And if you are standing in a bookstore with money to burn, buy one of John Canemaker's great new books, or R.O. Blechman's *The Book of Jonah*, a very cool novel-formatted combination of writing and drawings.) I am curious to hear what people think of *Serious Business*, as well. Actually, I'd like to know who the audience for this book is. I doubt that it's us.

Well, as long as I am grumbling, I can mention **AniFX**, the recent **NATPE**-sponsored animation money-fest in LA. NATPE sponsors the American programming markets, and I guess they saw an opportunity to make some money off of the animation industry. What they did manage to do was wring every last bit of joy out of animation by reducing it to program sales, panels and executives. The timing of the event was particularly odd—a few weeks after the **World Animation Celebration** in Pasadena, and a few weeks before **Annecy**. Who has the time to attend all these events? I was there very briefly, and split as soon as my panel was over. (I had to go back and work or there would be no animation to talk about next year.) Speaking of shows I work on, two will be premiering this summer. So that's what I'll be doing this summer—watching *Johnny Bravo* and *Cow & Chicken*. Have a good summer.

ASIFA-East
The International Animated Film Society, Northeast/New York Chapter
a program of the New York Foundation for the Arts

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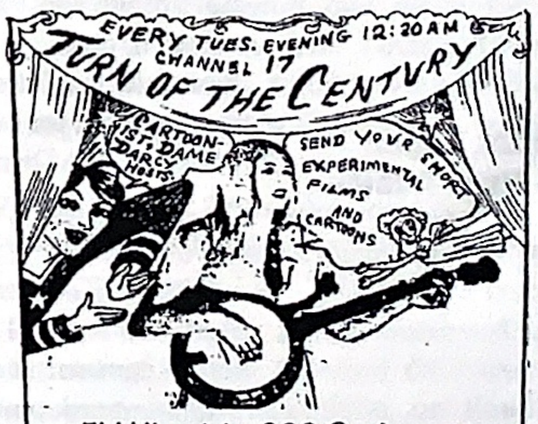


The Byte Stuff

Uncle Walt Wants You

Disney Seeks CGI Animators in NYC

Mark Segall & Russ Adams

APRIL 23. The Disney caravan pulled into town bearing clips— unfinished scenes from **Hercules, Tarzan, Fantasia 2000** and **Dinosaur.** Disney really *must* believe in the team approach — they sent out a small army of project leaders, programmers, computer animators, and execs to recruit for their CGI division. Occupying a small stage at Fashion Institute of Technology, 15 people took turns showing work in progress and discussing the various methods Disney's computer graphics artists use to bring life and character to their creations.

The mix—three-quarters **SIGGRAPH,** one-quarter **Women In Animation - NY**. The goal: to entice New Yorkers away from the Big Apple with CGI jobs in Burbank, Orlando, and Paris. In our Disney shopping bags, information kits listed the following positions: Modeler, Animator, Assistant Animator, Effects Animator, Tech Director-Software, Compositor, 2D Digital Artist and Digital Background Painter. "Disney is being heavily raided by Dreamworks," one audience member whispered, "they're here to replenish their ranks."

The evening tended to be more tell than show, with heavy going for less technical audience members when talk turned to nurbs, splines, strings, and collision detection algorithms. (And I'm still waiting for someone please tell me what a body sock is.) While the Disney folks were cagey about what softwares they were using, there were brief mentions of **SoftImage** and **Pixar Renderman**. A SIGGRAPH member asked if these and other commercially available programs were ever used unmodified. Why? Because what he was seeing looked a lot better than what **he** could do with the same software. The Disney people admitted that their programmers are always adding to existing programs to make them do more—and that they sometimes need to create new software.

Edward Koomer, head of digital animation at Disney in Burbank, stressed that while digital animation makes it easier to construct and move characters, the animator's most important task remains the same — to get these characters to act. Plenty of tweaking is necessary to overcome the programmed quality that software gives animation.

An especially intriguing segment showed the development of the hydra from **Hercules**. There's a scene where the monster sprouts 30 heads—the technical problems in animating it were staggering. Through a clever blend of storyboards, wireframe animations and finished animation, the audience was treated to a run-through of Hercules' battle with the monster, giving them a glimpse of the production process while also letting the finished product shine through. Another good blend of hand-drawn and computer work was a brief pencil test of a traditionally animated Tarzan swinging through a 3D computer-generated forest background.

> Disney really **must** believe in the team approach. To recruit for their CGI Division, they sent a **small army.**

A **Fantasia 2000** scene showcased another animation method. *The Steadfast Tin Soldier,* set to Shostakovich's Piano Concerto #2, used dynamic motion control algorithms to animate the ballerina's skirt and hair, giving a real-life spin to them as she twirls through the scene. However, an unusual problem resulted from this-since laws of physics were programmed into the software—what the programmers refer to as *physically based dynamics*, the twirls looked too real! "We create an editable dynamics because they won't like it they way we canned it"...the animators needed to go into the scene and tweak the twirls, adding bounce and stretch to exaggerate the movements and make it more "animated."

In discussing the upcoming live-action feature **Dinosaur** talk turned to *kinematics*—the art of building creatures from the bones out. The skeleton comes first. Algorithms attaching muscle to the skeleton are programmed with weight, inertia and stretching ability. Even the skin has dynamic movement mapped in, with fatty tissue padded underneath to simulate the rippling of real flesh.

Another prevailing theme was project flow from team to team. Asked "what happens to the dinosaur scene after this?" one of the speakers told us, "It's cleaned up by another couple of technical directors... then it goes to the lighting team as dictated by the layout group. It's then passed on to the Renderers, and the Compositors and finally goes to film."

The demonstrations were followed by a lively question and answer session, Certain questions the Disney folks were not ready to answer added unintended entertainment to the event. "What exactly is the story in this Dinosaur film?" got one big laugh when it was asked, and a second one when they refused to answer. The Disney folks fielded all queries deftly, giving all the insight they could without giving away any confidential information.

The event ended with a generous buffet. It was too noisy to make out exactly what job offers were being made over hors d'ouevres, but anyone interested in becoming part of Disney's CGI team can fax **(818) 544 5470** or Email **resumes@fa.disney.com.**

INTRODUCING...

Raquel Coelho
3D Animator
Blue Sky Studios

by Mark Segall

INTRODUCING...

This series features ASIFA members you might not have met yet. If you know of someone who's interesting, funny, surprising, intelligent, determined or any combination of the above, and is relatively new to the ASIFA scene, we'd like to hear about them. Interview them, write up your notes and then contact the editor (AlphaneMoo@aol.com) who will help you get it in shape for publication.

Professionally, Raquel Coelho leads a double life, but has a single aim—storytelling. She started writing children's stories as a teenager in Brazil. She published her first book, *The Centaur and The Wind,* at 21. She has since gone on to write or illustrate 13 others. Raquel is still a children's book author in Brazil, even though she actually lives in Stamford, Connecticut and works as a 3D animator at Blue Sky Studios in Harrison, NY. "I just mail everything to the publishers in Sao Paulo—the story first, then the art."

It's not as if she has idle time to fill; Blue Sky is keeping her pretty busy. One piece she worked on there has already aired—Rayovac's Father's Day *Filling Station* spot. But commercials aren't all she's doing. Raquel has been staying at her SGI workstation after hours to perfect a piece of SoftImage 3D animation many ASIFA members have already seen—*The Tapir*. The ASIFA-Fest 97 student category first prize winner was part of Coelho's 1996 Computer Arts Master's thesis at School of Visual Arts. The main part: a website illustrating two other Brazilian animal-legends. "The animation was a side-project that ended up taking a lot of my time. I ended up liking it better than the website—I like things that *move*." Raquels "side-project" won several other awards. It was first runner-up in **SoftImage**'s own contest and garnered an honorable mention at Europe's prestigious **Prix Ars Electronica Festival**.

Based on a reel of several Brazilian commercials, Coelho was accepted into Cal Art's Experimental Animation Program. She turned them down because when she asked for a catalog all they sent was one xeroxed page. Cal Art's loss was SVA's gain, as Raquel headed to NYC with the intention of doing "multimedia and books on CD-ROM." Continued experiments in animation led to a 1996 internship at LA's Rhythm & Hues. It was there she got her American nickname. "Coelho (Kwayl-yo) was too hard for people to pronounce, so I told them, 'It's just 'rabbit' in Portuguese. Everyone started calling me Raquel Rabbit". She must like the name, because it's on the nameplate by her office door.

Raquel likes NYC—especially Chinatown, where she often goes to buy the handmade paper she scans in to use as textures in SoftImage. But right now she prefers living in suburban Connecticut. Maybe she had enough of city life in her twenties—she spent them in the Brazilian capital of Sao Paulo, population 22 million. The twists of fate that led her from Brazil to Blue Sky began miles away from the Brazilian capital, in the city of Belo Horizonte ("Beautiful Horizon") in the state of Minas Geraes ("General Mines"). She grew up next door to the Federal University of Minera Geraes, where her father was a biology professor and her mother taught Fine Arts. When did she first pick up a pencil? Probably at one of her mother's drawing classes. "She often took me, and she'd give me a pencil and a pad to keep busy."

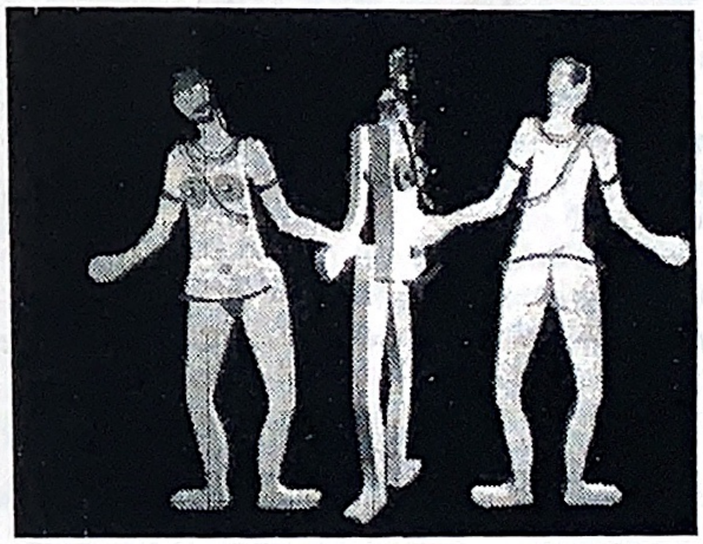
She also cites her mother as one of her biggest influences—the person who got her interested in folk-songs, folk-art and folk-tales. "Brazil is a few big cities and lots of wild countryside. Mom took a tape recorder out to these little farms with no electricity, recording people's songs and stories and making pictures of them. Sometimes I went with her. She'd bring these recordings home...in our house we were always playing this very strange music." Coelho continues to find inspiration in all things Brazilian—the Afro-Brazilian dance-game "Capoeira", music made on a folk instrument called the Berimbau, and the work of children's author Monteiro Lobato, as well-known in Brazil as Dr. Seuss is here.

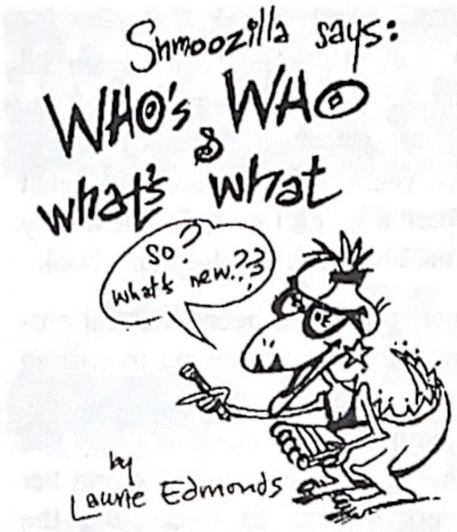
The figures in *The Tapir*, and the way Coelho moves them, show the influence of a brief teenage career as a puppeteer. In high school, she joined two boys to form a troupe. They all worked together building the puppets and the stage they carried from town to town. For two years, the three students spent their spare time performing a show they based on a best-selling children's book.

Raquel feels its all been a natural progression—from puppeteering to writing children's books, to illustrating the books with her own collages when she felt other illustrators weren't doing her characters justice, to re-creating the same kind of collages on computer and translating puppeteering skills into software skills to make them move.

The last thing Coelho showed me was an abstract of the paper she'll present at LA's SIGGRAPH convention this August. It's about the ideas, images and storytelling style used in The Tapir. She characterizes her approach to narrative as "an artistic type of game where the structure doesn't destroy the myth but recreates its quality. The 3D space is the medium for a new interpretation of the myth, but it can never overpower the essential and universal nature of its storytelling."

A side view in SoftImage of the puppet-like "2-1/2D" figures used in **The Tapir.**





Welcome back to the **Hard Copy** of animation. Sssh! I hear a scoop developing just around the corner! Didja see all the commotion when uncle **Godzilla** made his NY debut on 23rd St.? What's with the tanks, the bright lights, the screaming? **Uncle Godzi** was only dropping by to pay the **Shmoo** a little visit!

John Serpentelli (see ***Introducing***, 12/96) is opening a film/animation school for kids this month in Philadelphia's Chestnut Hill. **Art and Animation Station** is a 4-week animation intensive—the kids work on original concepts and try their hand at multimedia, sand, cutouts, paint-on-glass, and clay. John has done several films in collaboration with kids. The most recent—***Once Upon a Time***—won an ASIFA award this past April. Others have been on Sesame Street; he's also been working with **UNICEF**.

Teresa Drilling (Will Vinton Studios, Portland Oregon) let me know she just finished directing two commercials, a **:30** and a **:15**. She animated one of them, a **Colgate** ad with three toothbrushes groovin' to the **Motown** song ***Hold Me***. The actual product is on rods with a stop-motion morph at the end for the flint effect. The ad agency was ***Young & Rubicam***. It's being National Broadcast, now showing!

Also running nationally is a spot for **Tropicana**, where an orange tries to get into an empty glass bottle. It gets in and—oops—get's caught in the bottle neck. It's a silicon orange, sometimes on rods—stop motion with some minor CGI enhancements. The agency for that is **Foote Cone Belding NY**.

Leonard Maltin once described **George Griffin** as "a modern master of animation with a bottomless bag of tricks." Catch a little of his magic Thursday, June 19 at 6pm at the Donnell Library Center, 20 West 53rd Street, when he'll screen and discuss four films: ***Ko-ko***, where animation and jazz collide in a kinetic Charlie Parker song. ***Lineage***, an animated essay about where cartoons and abstract art intersect. ***Newfangled***, a satire of advertising. ***A Little Routine***, winner, first place prize, **ASIFA-Fest 95**.

MTV is introducing a new half-hour show called **Cartoon Sushi**. It will be chock-full of short, funny animated pieces. The executive producer is **Abby Terkuhle** and the associate producer is **Merle Becker**. The first show will air on July 17th. Watch for it. They're also looking for people interested in pitching something. Call the hotline—**212 654-3777**—for more info.

What an eyesore! **Well-wishing**: Animation writer **Anne Bobroff** was born with an unusual cataract in her eye—it's in the shape of a five-pointed star. The "beautiful" cataract has lost favor with Anne and is being removed on Thurs, June 5 at White Plains Hospital, a new clear lens put in. We hope it heals speedily. Here's lookin' atcha, kid.

Well, see you in September. Have a good tan, a cold drink, an electric fan. Call me anytime with your new info—I'll be starting to collect juicy bits again in August. Love, Shmoo. **(212) 496-3759**.

Notes on this month's screening

Mark Segall & Anne Bobroff

Bring Your Films to the Open Screening

Linda Simensky will once again host our annual Open Screening. No pre-registration is necessary. Simply bring your 16mm films, VHS or ¾" tapes to 721 Broadway, Room 108, at 6pm on Friday, June 13. We'll screen them all! Some highlights of last year's Open Screening:

- Colleen Davis trekked all the way from Ithaca with the **Artbear Pigmation** reel, which included Colleen and husband Bill's first foray into computer animation.
- Jason Fruchter showed *Hermie and Hal*, about two guys, each on his own little island. Enemies "for reasons they can't remember anymore", they're forced to unite to battle a dragon.
- Animated characters starring in the films included a smiley face (Howard Beckerman's Nick Jr. interstitials), a pair of pants (Bob Kaufman's *Animated Shorts*), a flea (Dale Chowdis' *Dog That Caught The Moon*), and a tiny witch who keeps getting dumped on by an enormous cow (Signe Baumann's *Witch and Cow*).
- Styles ranged from the watery psychedelicism of Don Duga's magic marker on paper in *Beat Images* to the spooky, evocative stop motion puppetry of Veronica Balint's *Last Hand*. (Balint's film about a gambler trying to beat Death was the evening's only stop-motion piece. Here's hoping puppets and clay will play a bigger role this year.)
- Duga and Beckerman's SVA thesis students came with their work. John Wilson showed *Signs of Progress*.
- Toni Tysen's film told us why sloths have three fingers. Her second student short, My Sister Tracy, gave thanks to Buzzco.

We can't predict what you'll see, but we're confident our third annual Open Screening will be as memorable as the two that preceded it.

Linda invites filmmakers in the audience to stand up to talk briefly about their work. Last year, the funniest speech was by Latvian Signe Baumann, introducing three films she made in her homeland at Dauka Studio. Signe characterized herself, in contrast to the assembled audience of "cosmopolitan New Yorkers", as "a countryside girl, interested in cows, eating and marrying."

Last year's audience included Moscow screenwriter/animator Irina Margolina, who had just finished a six-month teaching stint in New York and was about to return to Russia for the big elections. While we can't predict who'll be in the audience this year, or what they'll see, we're confident our third annual screening will be as memorable as the two that preceded it. We encourage everyone to bring their film.

Plympton does the Dustys

On May 21, 1997, School of Visual Arts held its eighth annual student film awards, the Dustys, at Cineplex Odeon Worldwide Cinemas, Manhattan. Though live-action film predominated, animation was by no means slighted; speakers included animation director **Yvette Kaplan** of MTV's ***Beavis and Butt-Head*** (an SVA alumnus, class of '78) and computer animation director **Chris Wedge** of Blue Sky Studios. ASIFA-East members in attendance included animator **Bill Plympton**, who was kind enough to capture some of the presenters for us in pen and ink.

SVA Film Department. Chairman **Reeves Lehman** kicked off the festivities.

Gene Stavis, SVA Professor of Film History, served as Master of Ceremonies.

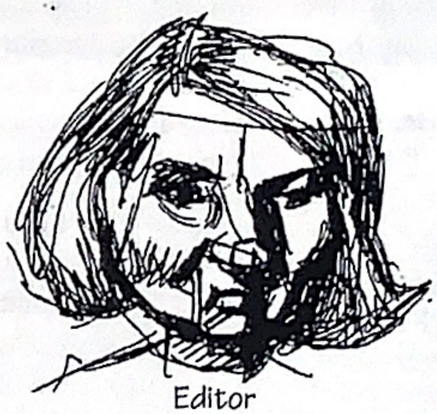
Yvette Kaplan, Supervising Director of MTV's Beavis & Butthead, presented the Outstanding Traditional Animation award to **Aaron Augenblick** for ***The Midnight Carnival.***

Chris Wedge of Blue Sky Studios presented the award for Outstanding Stop-Motion Animation to **Tak Hoon Kim** for ***A Christmas Lament.***

Other Presenters

Director
Bryan Singer

Cinematographer
Fred Murphy



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PAM SCHECHTER'S

LEGAL BRIEFS

Co-Production Facilities Agreements

Often, when one of my clients is in the process of developing an independent film or television project, she falls short of funds to complete the work. She gets very frustrated and anxious, convinced her projects will never be completed. However, all is not lost. There are creative ways to finish the project without spending large sums of money. One way is to negotiate an arrangement with the facility where the animator will complete the editing and post-production process without laying out funds up-front.

A contract between the animator and the facility where the animator will complete production is usually called a co-production facilities agreement. In this arrangement, the production facility waives or defers all or part of its up-front compensation for services in exchange for a certain percentage of income or profits from the film or television project.

In the typical co-production facilities contract, the parties specifically describe the project. This includes the title of the project, the nature of the project, the length of the project and the dates of the production. There is usually a production schedule attached to the end of the contract.

The services to be furnished by the production facility are listed. They may include specific equipment, facilities and manpower. The production schedule for use of these services is designated as well. The production facility rate card for these services is also listed in case any additional services are required. In this way, the charges for additional services are agreed to in advance, so there is no disagreement at a later date. The animator usually designates one person in the agreement who can order any services from the production facility. The production facility knows this is the only person who may give it instructions. These instructions are usually given in writing.

In the agreement, the production facility is waiving or reducing its fees and will therefore require a profit participation in the project. In most cases, the production facility will also eventually get reimbursed for the services it provides. Since the production facility is a profit participant, it is entitled to reports and accountings with its payments. This is usually done once or twice per year. In addition, the production facility has a right of audit and inspection of the animator's books and records.

As you can see from the above, the arrangement between an animator and production facility where the facility waives or reduces its up front fees is a simple one. The co-production facility agreement allows the animator to finish his film or television project without spending a lot of his funds on the editing and post-production process. The production facility eventually gets reimbursed for its services and also becomes a profit participant. When a project is successful, both parties win.

NYC entertainment lawyer **Pamela A. Schecter** represents several prominent animators including **Eric Fogel**, creator of the MTV series **The Head**, and **Beavis & Butthead** director **Yvette Kaplan**. She teaches a course called **Legal and Business Issues for Animators** at the **School of Visual Arts**

She can be reached at 212 517 2572

Linda Simensky

ANNECY FESTIVAL UPDATE

Greetings from the south...east of France.

After a week in France I've come to the conclusion that the star of Annecy 97 was—the weather! Six wonderfully warm days, instead of the cold rain we suffered in '95.

I've realized that's what Annecy is all about—good weather, eating outdoors, and relaxing by the lake across the street. Why stand around inside complaining about the festival, when you can sit outside drinking lemonade and talking about how the perfect weather?

Annecy '97 definitely was *not* about the films. Some great things were shown, but we had to dig through a lot of less than captivating stuff to unearth the gems. As always, rumor had it that the best films were in the panoramas (sidebars) and *not* the competitions, but who could find enough hours in the day to see everything?

I decided to focus on the short film and television categories. As a judge in the television category, I was compelled to sit through several programs I might have skipped otherwise. The short film category was far more interesting. These films ranged from great to pointless. It was no surprise that Sylvain Chomet's *The Old Lady and the Pigeons* won the Grand Prix, but I must admit, the more I watched the film, the less I liked it. While the design is interesting and notable, I had a tough time deciphering the film. It was structured as a narrative, which made the cryptic moments frustrating. Yet, many people loved this film, so I'll just wait for the analysis of it in the Animation Journal.

Other popular new films included *The Mermaid*, (Alexander Petrov, Russia), and *Flatworld,* by Oscar winner Daniel Greaves, who did the film *Manipulation* a few years back. *Killing Heinz* (Stefan Eling, Germany) got some laughs, as did *Heartbreak Motel* (Greg Holfeld, Australia).

The evil jet lag kicked in as soon as I arrived in France. I hadn't even realized this until a colleague commented on a certain film she liked that I couldn't remember. Skimming through the festival catalogue, it dawned on me that I'd slept though sizable portions of the first and second short film competitions. Fortunately, I didn't sleep through any of the films I was judging.

Being on the jury was challenging, and I don't mean just the staying awake part! It's difficult to judge the writing and

artistic merit of a show simultaneously. Some jury members didn't speak French or English. Explaining the subtleties of writer-driven shows like *Pond Life* or *Daria* to someone from Hungary was challenging, to say the least.

Our jury president, Jacqueline Joubert, was France's first female television announcer in the 50s and 60s. Her take on television animation surprised us. She kept encouraging us to keep in mind how innovative the shows were, asking us "Does this advance television animation to the next level?"

The festival was much better organized this year. There were moments of suspense, such as the first day, waiting to see when the catalogues would finally arrive. But all in all, they did a good job accommodating 8,000 guests. And a **great** job with the weather.

Serious Business
The Art and Commerce of Animation in America from Betty Boop to Toy Story

Stefan Kanfer, foreword by **Chuck Jones**, 256 pp, $27.50, Scribners, NY 1997 — reviewed by Howard Beckerman

Though animation is a worldwide enterprise and sterling productions come from all parts of the globe, the term *animation* evokes images of characters and situations of strictly American origin. In *Serious Business*, former Time magazine writer and editor Stefan Kanfer lays the story of this home-grown art before us in sentences as concise and terse as any seven minute cartoon.

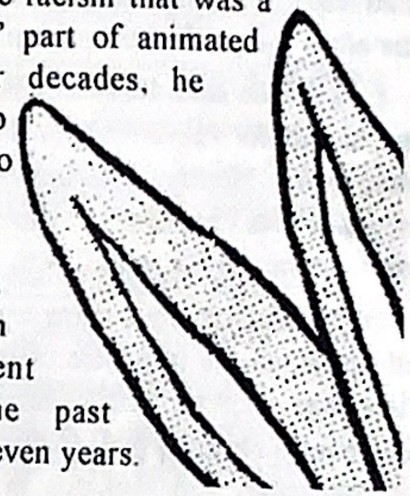
His purpose in this exploration is to show us that the "chases, pratfalls and outrageous puns" of cartoons are "their own eccentric way [of providing] an extraordinary reflection of the society and politics of their time. They also reveal a great deal about the psychology of the people who made them." Woody Woodpecker (and those equally audacious creatures Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck) were emblems of their age, a time in which "Depression and the fear of war ...had raised theAmerican voice and given it a brassy, nervous edge." By the time WWII ended, the gum-chewing GI and the carrot-chomping rabbit had both become national heroes.

Kanfer comes to animation through his own strong childhood interest and a son, a graduate of Cal Arts, working in animation. His love for cartoons surfaces as he unrolls the timeline from the earliest chalk drawings of J. Stuart Blackton to the current television runs of Beavis and Butthead and the Simpsons. He fills in the nature of the characters on-screen and those off-screen and further defines the personalities that Shamus Culhane drew for us in *Talking Animals and Other People.*

A few minor blips show up here and there. Kanfer uses the traditional Irish spelling of Culhane's first name, though Shamus never wanted to be known as *Seamus.* A description of a section of Blackton's 1906 *Humorous Phases of Funny Faces* is confused with a portion of a later film *Lightning Sketches* (1907).

History defies simplification; Kanfer realizes this and avoids cluttering the story. He concentrates on cel animation, barely touches on puppet films and dutifully includes the computerized *Toy Story.* What he does expand on is the genius of McCay, the commercial instincts of perfectionist Disney, the extravagant exaggerations of Avery and the improvisatory style of the brothers Fleischer. Along the way he misses the importance of UPA, stresses the limitations of Hanna and Barbera, and is a tad worshipful of Chuck Jones, (who did generously provide the book's introduction).

It's important to add that *Serious Business* is highly readable in marked contrast to the growing number of unintelligible tomes by academics writing strictly for their colleagues. In those books, any information offered is always held in the tortured grip of sociopolitical significance. While Kanfer reveals the harsh, embarassing side of cartoons—especially the racism that was a "natural" part of animated film for decades, he also points to what has given us so much enjoyment over the past ninety-seven years.



Dreamland Japan
Writings on Modern Manga

Frederik Schodt, 360 pp., $16.95, Stone Bridge Press 1996 — reviewed by Brian Cirulnick

Japanese culture has become a major influence in the United States. Japanese animated films (anime), can now be found in most American video stores. Japanese comic books (manga), though not nearly as mainstream, continue to grow in popularity. Frederik L. Schodt's 1983 book, *Manga Manga, the World of Japanese Comics*, is widely considered the seminal work on manga and its popularity across all age groups and social strata in Japan. *Dreamland Japan*, though intended as a sequel, unfortunately spends many pages rehashing things found in the first book.

Both books detail a tendency towards the "Hollywood-ization" of Japanese manga, with more effort put into depicting sex and violence and less into storytelling. If you long for the simpler days, where story and character were paramount, you may be shocked to discover how far the apple has fallen from the tree in the past decade.

Schodt provides an up-to-the-minute guide to manga with detailed publication information, and over a hundred illustrations, with covers of the more popular magazines in full color. There are short biographical sketches of manga authors and artists Hinako Sugiura, King Terry, Yoshikazu Ebisu, Kazuichi Hanawa, Suehiro Maruo, Akira Narita, Shungicu Uchida, Yoshiharu Tsuge, Akimi Yoshida, Reiko Okano, Milk Morizono and Fujiko Fujio.

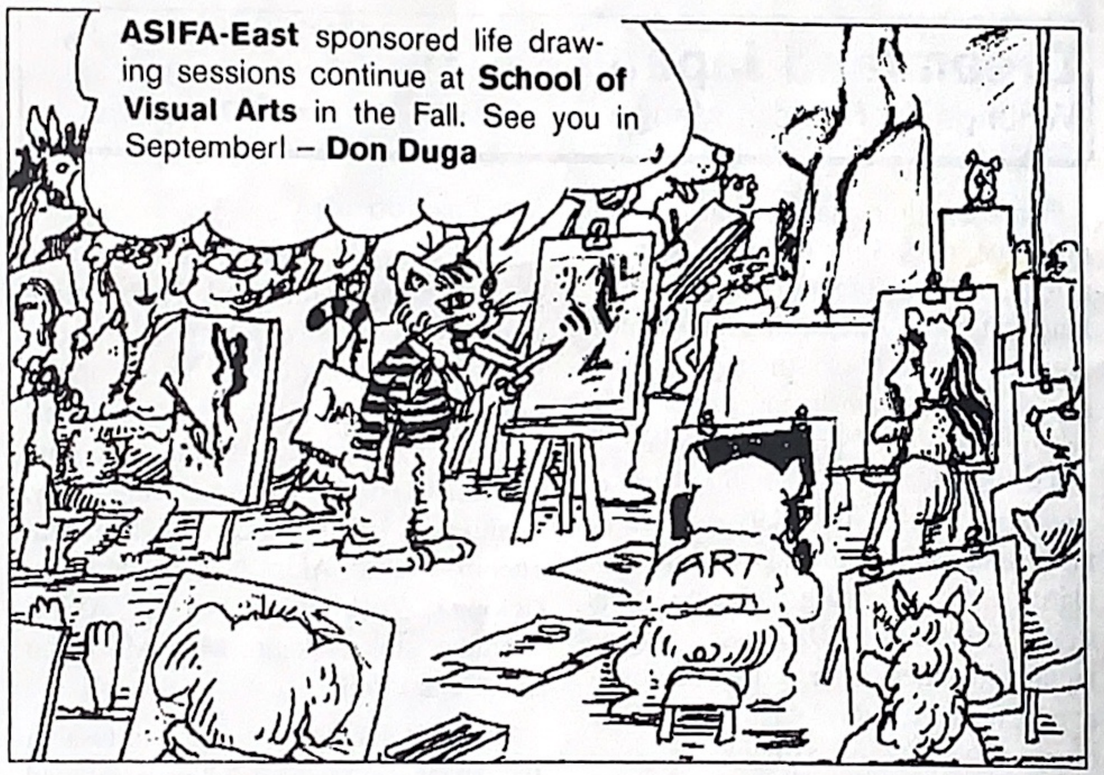
An entire chapter is devoted to Osamu Tezuka, the *manga no kamisama* ("god of comics"), father of both the manga and anime industries. He dominated the field till his death in 1989. Most Americans have heard of *Astroboy.* ASIFA members may be familiar with Tezuka's successful independent shorts *Jumping* and *Broken Down Film.* Worldwide, the Astroboy character may

be better known than Mickey Mouse. Schodt, who served as Dr. Tezuka's translator for many years, covers his life and times as few others could. This chapter alone makes the book worth the read.

Schodt also describes the rise of master storyteller Hayao Miyazaki, whose manga and animated films have transcended the genre and gone on to become known the world over.

Of particular interest to me were several essays on the influence of manga on Japanese society. While Schodt sees some links between violent, pornographic magazines and violence in the real world, he emphasizes that these represent a fraction of the manga available. Manga's social effects are generally beneficial—most importantly, it contributes to Japan's 100% literacy rate by inspiring even the youngest children to read.

Schodt looks at manga past and present, provides sources of information about manga and anime on the internet. Lovers of anime will not find much here about particular animators or animation studios, but they will discover the manga roots of their favorite films. For the serious devotee of Japanese comics, this book holds a wealth of information.


ASIFA-East sponsored life drawing sessions continue at School of Visual Arts in the Fall. See you in September! – Don Duga
ART

ASIFAEAST June96

Fri	**Jun 13**	6:00pm	**ASIFA-East's** Annual Open Screening– Bring Your Films!	**Tisch School of the Arts, NYU,** 721 Bway Rm.108
Thurs	**Jun 19**	6:00pm	**George Griffin** presents and discusses his animated shorts.	**Donnell Library,** 20 W, 53 St. ☎ (212) 621-0624

Women In Animation/ NY Hold First Group Art Exhibition

WIA/NY will hold their first Group Art Show at the Cedar Tavern from June 1 through July 11, 1997.

Twenty professional in the animation industry will be displaying their art upstairs in the Greenwich Village landmark, a gathering place for artists and writers for four decades. Work may be viewed after 6pm Mondays through Fridays. Proceeds from any pieces sold will benefit the artists as well as WIA/NY in its educational and professional outreach programs. The show has been organized and curated by fine artists and animation director Irra Verbitsky, one of the founding members of WIA/NY

WIA/NY is a professional nonprofit organization in conjunction with Women in Animation International, established in Los Angeles in 1994. WIA seeks to foster the concerns and advancement of women who are involved with all aspects of animation art and to bring our art form more into the public eye. Membership is open to all interest persons and program cover a wide-range of animation related topics.

For membership information contact Marci Selsberg at (212) 874-1952.

❑ Madeleine Arthurs ❑ Veronica Balint ❑ Janet Benn ❑ Anne Bobroff-Hajal ❑ Susan Brand ❑ Mimi Brennan ❑ John Canemaker ❑ Laurie Edmonds ❑ Emily Hubley ❑ Faith Hubley ❑ Gwenda Kaczor ❑ Pooh Kaye ❑ Nancy Keegan ❑ Floria Liceica ❑ Ruth Peyser ❑ Bill Plympton ❑ Debra Solmon ❑ Irra Verbitsky ❑ Linda Vigdor ❑

& WOMEN IN ANIMATION/NEW YORK
Cordially invite you to a
GROUP ART SHOW
June 12-July 11, 1997
after 6pm Mon.-Sat.
upstairs at the historic
CEDAR TAVERN
82 University Place (11/12th Streets), NYC
Tel. (212) 929-9089
Reception: Wed. June 18, 4-6pm
Curator: Irra Verbitsky

RESOURCES

MTV Networks seeks short, humorous animated films for a show that begins July 1997, continues throughout the year–a miscellany similar in format to the long-running series **Liquid Television**. They are also accepting proposals, scripts and storyboards. For more info, ☎ **212 654 3777** or email **cartnsushi@aol.com**

Anny Mator *by howard beckerman* **to be continued...**

ANNY, TONIGHT THE JURY GIVES THE PRIZES.
THAT'S A HUNK FOR ANYONE'S KNAPSACK!
1ST PRIZE
ARE YOU ANXIOUS ABOUT WINNING?
DUNNO, KIMBEL-
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I MAY HAVE WON SOMETHIN' ALREADY!

July Film Festivals 97 Aug Sep

Deadline	Festival or Organization	Contact Information
7/4/97	**Oxfordshire Independent Video**	Maddie Shepherd 011 44 1295 273265 011 44 1295 273265
7/7/97	**Festival Internationale de Cinema** Sitges	Angel Sala 011 343 415 3938 011 343 237 6251
7/12/97	**Chicago International Film Festival**	312 644 3400 312 644 0784 filmfest@wwa.com,
7/15/97	**Aspen Film Festival**	970 925 6882 970 925 6882
7/15/97	**Palm Springs International Short Film Festival**	619 322 2930 619 322 4087
7/19/97	**Albany International Short Film Festival**	518 453 1000 518 453 1350
8/1/97	**Int'l Children's Animation Festival** Nizhny Novgorod Russia	7 095 978 54 16 7 095 978 54 16
8/1/97	**San Sebastian Horror & Fantasy Festival**	011 34 9 43481153 011 34 9 43430621
8/14/97	**Cinanima Portugal**	011 351 2 726015
8/15/97	**Austin Heart of Film Festival**	512 478 4795
8/15/97	**London Film Festival**	Jane Ivey 171 815 1322 171 633 0786
8/15/97	**Museum of Fine Arts "First Night"** Boston, MA	Pam Delaney 617 369 3305

Deadline	Festival or Organization	Contact Information
8/15/97	**Short Attention Span Film Festival** San Francisco, CA	415 282 4316 SASFVF@aol.com
8/23/97	**Hamptons Int'l Film Festival**	
9/1/97	**Asian Computer Animation Festival** Kembangan Singapore	krystal@pacific.net.sg 65 441 6828, 65 445 65 448 4090
9/1/97	**Boston Jewish Film Festival** Boston, MA	617 441 3355 BJFF@cyways.com
9/1/97	**Columbus Int'l Film & Video** Columbus, OH	chrisawd@infinet.com
9/1/97	**Fort Lauderdale Int'l Film Festival** Florida	954 563 0500 **Fax** 954 564 1206
9/1/97	**Leipzig Int'l Docu & Anim Film Festival**	
9/1/97	**New York Expo of Short Film & Video** NYC	212 505 7742 212 873 1353 rswbc@cunyvm.cuny.
9/1/97	**Oulu International Children's Film Festival**	raimo.kinisjarvi@oufil
9/2/97	**Festival du Cinema**	819 762 6212 819 762 6762
9/13/97	**Worldfest Charleston**	713 965 9955 713 965 9960
9/15/97	**Bilbao Int'll Fest of Documentary and Film** Spain	011 34 4 4245507 011 34 4 424 5624
9/15/97	**Namur Short Film Festival** Namur, Belgium	

ASIFA-East

The International Animated Film Society

c/o Michael Sporn Animation

632 Broadway, 4th Floor

New York, NY 10012

June members: Time to mail your membership forms in to the address above.